

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in this application.

Applicant's acknowledges with thanks the examiner's indication that claims 22-24 are allowed.

The examiner also indicated that claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant amended independent claim 1 to include the allowable features of claim 5. Applicant notes that the features added to claim 1 recite that the transparent layer interconnecting the second electrical contact is made of "conductive material" rather than "light-conducting material" as was erroneously recited in originally filed claim 5. That the interconnecting material is a conductive material is described, for example, at the last paragraph on page 4 of the originally filed application, where it is stated that:

The second contact layer can be realized as either continuous or discontinuous; in the latter case, the discontinuous portions are interconnected by a layer of transparent, conductive material, for example, indium-tin oxide (ITO).

The first paragraph on page 8 of the originally filed application also describes the second contact layer. Applicant further notes that to the extent that the interconnecting layer is transparent, it also conducts light (i.e., it is an inherent feature of the transparent interconnecting layer that it conducts light).

Claim 5 was cancelled. Additionally, applicant added new claim 25, which depends from independent claim 1, and which recites a feature, similar to the feature recited in allowed claim 23, that the interconnecting transparent layer includes indium tin oxide.

In addition, applicant amended claim 14 and 21 to make them dependent from independent claim 1, and to remove any wording that is already recited in independent claim 1.

Further, applicant cancelled claims 4 and 18.

After these amendments, claims 1-3, 6-17 and 19-25 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 22 are independent.

The examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 6-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,779,924 to Krames et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,309,001 to Watanabe et al.

As indicated above, amended independent claim 1 now recites a feature similar to that previously appearing in allowable claim 5, namely, "said second electrical contact layer is discontinuous and is interconnected by a layer of transparent, conductive material."

With respect to Krames, the examiner admitted "Krames further fails to disclose that the second electrical contact has a lateral structure and provides substantially uniform coupling of the current into the current spreading layer" (page 3 of the Office Action). Krames, therefore, certainly does not disclose that that electrical contact is also "discontinuous and is interconnected by a layer of transparent, conductive material," as recited by independent claim 1.

Watanabe is generally directed to a surface electrode having a pad and first order branches that extend from the pad. The surface electrode also has second-order branches extending from the first order branches, and third-order branches diverged and linearly extending from the second-order branches (Abstract). But at no point does Watanabe disclose or suggest that that surface electrode is "discontinuous and is interconnected by a layer of transparent, conductive material."

Since neither Krames nor Watanabe discloses or suggests, alone or in combination at least "said second electrical contact layer is discontinuous and is interconnected by a layer of transparent, conductive material," that feature is patentable over the cited art.

Claims 2-3, 6-17, 19-21 and 25-26 depend from independent claim 1 and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1.

It is believed that all the rejections and/or objections raised by the examiner have been addressed.

As stated in MPEP 714.12, discussing 37 C.F.R. §1.116, "[a]ny amendments that will place the application either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered." Because applicant amended independent claim 1 to include the features of a previously allowable claim, applicant contends that the amendments made are of the kind governed by the

provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests entry of the amendments and allowance of the application.

Canceled claims, if any, have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Any circumstance in which the applicant has (a) addressed certain comments of the examiner does not mean that the applicant concedes other comments of the examiner, (b) made arguments for the patentability of some claims does not mean that there are not other good reasons for patentability of those claims and other claims, or (c) amended or canceled a claim does not mean that the applicant concedes any of the examiner's positions with respect to that claim or other claims.


In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Enclosed is a Petition for One Month Extension of Time. The fees in the amount of \$120 are being paid concurrently on the Electronic Filing System (EFS) by way of Deposit Account authorization. Please apply any other required fees to deposit account 06-1050, referencing the attorney docket number shown above.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

June 16, 2006


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